

APPENDIX 3



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Chief Constable

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Chief Constable

March 2019

To all Candidates, Agents and Campaigners

Dear Candidate or Agent,

**From the Chief Constable of Lancashire Constabulary and the Local/Deputy Returning Officer
- Preston City Council**

**Local & Parish Elections, Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner Elections and [County Council
Elections] – 6 May 2021**

We are writing jointly to all candidates and agents in the forthcoming elections, 6th May 2021, to emphasise the need for all candidates and agents to maintain the highest standards of conduct and integrity during the campaign. In addition for this year and due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the need to observe and fully comply with the national rules that are in force in relation movement and gatherings.

With this objective in mind, you are invited to read the updated Electoral Commission [Code of Conduct for Campaigners](#) relating amongst other matters to postal voting, proxy voting, and actions and behaviour at hustings and polling stations, and sign the voluntary declaration at the end of this letter to which it refers. The Code has been endorsed by all the major political parties at Westminster and by signing the bottom of this letter you confirm that you and your supporters will comply with it. The Local/Deputy Returning Officer would be pleased to receive a signed copy from you.

The Police and Returning Officers have a well-established close working relationship and will act in accordance with the agreed Electoral Commission/College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on Policing Elections, to prevent and detect any wrongdoing and electoral malpractice.

You are encouraged to make yourself familiar with the above Code of Conduct and ensure that anyone who works for you or on your behalf, in any capacity, during the elections, adheres strictly to it. You should, therefore, ensure that your campaign workers are familiar with its contents, and check their understanding.

We wish to make it absolutely clear that any abuse of the arrangements for postal and/or proxy voting constitutes an offence under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and will not be tolerated, and it should be noted the offence of Personation carries a sentence of up to two years in prison. All candidates, agents and campaigners are expected to do everything within their power to ensure a fair, honest and equitable campaign, and that their campaign workers and supporters do not engage in any abuse of the system for postal/proxy voting or any other aspect of the arrangements for the election.

Any suspicion of unlawful conduct on behalf of any party, candidate, agent, campaigner or supporter, or any breach of Electoral Regulations/requirements should be reported in the first instance to the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer may in turn refer the matter to the Police.

Lancashire Constabulary and the Crown Prosecution Service will consider any evidence of unlawful conduct, and prosecutions will be brought against offenders if necessary.

The National Police Chiefs Council and the Electoral Commission closely monitor all cases and allegations of alleged electoral malpractice in England and Wales. Historically, of the cases where malpractice is substantiated and where court proceedings are initiated, the greater percentage have resulted in the offenders being given significant custodial sentences and being barred from standing again for political office for up to five years.

Please be assured that we are committed to achieving a fair and equitable poll, and actively investigating any cases of alleged electoral malpractice brought to our notice at the 6th May 2021 elections. Where any substantiated allegations are made, prosecutions, amongst other sanctions may result.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Phillips', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Adrian Phillips
Returning Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Rhodes', written in a cursive style.

Andy Rhodes
Chief Constable

Please complete and forward to the Local/Deputy Returning Officer.

I, (print name)

standing as Local Councillor/PCC candidate/agent (delete as appropriate)

for (print ward/division/PCC/other)

of

..... **Council** **Constituency**

agree to abide by the National Code of Conduct for campaigners, postal voting, proxy voting and polling stations

Signed

Date